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September 15, 2009

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**SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS CALLS FOR STATUS
REPORT ON PROBATION CASE MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM'S ABILITY TO TRACK AWOL YOUTH**

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today directed the County's Chief Executive Office and Chief Probation Officer to report back to the Board on the status of the Probation Case Management System's ability to track Absent Without Leave (AWOL) youth.

On May 20, 2008, after concerns were raised about the department's ability to track youth who went AWOL after being placed in group homes, the Board of Supervisors directed the CEO and Chief Probation Officer to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the department's policies and procedures.

The Board was also concerned that minors who were AWOL posed a safety risk to themselves, as was illustrated by a minor who was found dead on May 8, 2008, while AWOL for 10 days from a suitable placement.

The Board was concerned that the Probation Department did not establish a dedicated unit to diligently and consistently locate minors who were on AWOL status from group homes or who were on bench warrant status in the community.

The probation department has since implemented the first phase of its Probation Case Management System, which consolidated a number of databases and case management systems within the department.

The system allows deputy probation officers to access all records and action taken regarding juveniles within the probation system. But in his motion, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said “preliminary discussions with representatives of the Probation Department seem to indicate that the system is not without limitations.”

The Board of Supervisors approved a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas that directs the CEO and Chief Probation Officer to report within 30 days on the status of the systems ability to track AWOLS and warrants.

The motion also directs the lead attorney of the Children’s Special Investigation Unit to include the results of an investigation into the death of Lazhane S., a child who was under the jurisdiction of the Department of Children and Family Services.

It calls for any information concerning possible contacts the child may have had with the Probation Department and/or any other law enforcement entity.

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